

Financially my life has not been a very big success. But in adventure, unusual experiences, and things accomplished under difficult circumstances it has been full, and to me, a very satisfactory life. I have been through storms at sea, revolutions, fires, earthquake, a hurricane that wiped out my life's savings, followed by a depression, and came up smiling and with courage to face the future. I have taken as my motto "hope for the best, prepare for the worst, and take what comes". I have reared 6 children. The four oldest have a college degree, two went on for masters degrees and one for a Ph.D. Owing to the hurricane, the depression and the breaking-up of the family, followed by the war, the younger ones had to make out with a high school education and some special courses. All are married and rearing families. I have 35 grandchildren, scattered from Oregon to Brazil.

Following graduation, I went out with F.S. Gordon's "picture boys" and sold enlarged pictures in Southwestern Minnesota, Northeastern South Dakota and Southeastern North Dakota. In the fall, I took the chair of Science in Nebraska Central College. The school, itself, was enjoyable but uneventful. Two things happened during this year that changed the whole course of my life. The first, a very natural thing, I met and courted Miss Birdie Pickett. The second, not so natural, I hatched up a deal with Sylvester Jones to send him some money, he would add more to it and buy us a farm in Cuba. Later, I was to go down and farm it and do what missionary work I could on the side. About that time, Luther Hill of Class 1891 went down and he, Sylvester, and Zenas Martin, Superintendent of Friends Missions in Cuba, went out land hunting. They found a very fertile valley with three adjoining farms, all unsurveyed, that seemed to just fit the requirements. Martin bought 2 or 3 thousand acres of all grassland. Hill, about half as much, fully half wooded, and Sylvester, 100 to 150 acres, only some 15 or 20 acres in grass and the rest in woods. One important thing they ~~missed~~ all three overlooked. It was nine miles to where the so-called Kings Highway crossed the newly built railroad, and 30 miles to the nearest market and it only a small

one. The roads were passable to the big Cuban oxcart in dry weather, but in the rainy season it was with difficulty you could get over them on horseback.

At the end of the school year, I took a group of my students out selling enlarged pictures in Western Nebraska and Northeast Colorado. When we got so far west that the houses were too far apart for profit, we took a bicycle trip to Denver, Palmer Lake, Colorado Springs, Garden of the Gods and Pikes Peak. They charged \$3.00 to ride a donkey to the top of Pikes Peak or \$5.00 to ride the cogway car. It was a hard trip but we walked.

That fall I went to Cuba by way of Niagara Falls and New York City. That was my first sight of salt water. It took us 5 days straight sailing to reach Havana. Then 8 more days unloading cargo at every port on the North Coast of Cuba till we reached Gibara. There Sylvester met me at the boat and I started a strange life in a strange country with a strange language. Gibara was a walled city, with many block houses along the wall. I got my first real jar when I walked down to the block house where the main road entered the city. Every Cuban coming into the town carried a machete on his belt. It is a knife about two feet long and looks like a cross between a sword and a corn cutter, and can be used for either. All had to check their machetes and leave them at the block house, but could reclaim them on their return. After all I had read about the butcheries during the Spanish wars, frankly, I was scared till Sylvester soothed my nerves. The roads ran through the woods and frequently a tree would fall across the road, or a mudhole would get so deep a horse could no longer get through, and with his machete the Cuban would quickly cut a new trail past the obstruction. I very soon discovered that I, too, had to carry one.

Naturally, the first thing I wanted to see was my land. Sylvester couldn't go with me so he put me on the narrow gauge train and sent me to Holguin which was the nearest town to the land. There I went to the Friends Mission where Charles Haworth, Penn '99, was in charge. He, in turn, took me down to see Elnos McCracken, originally from Pleasant Plain, Iowa. He operated a business of guiding Americans, translating deeds, checking titles, etc. I employed him, with two

horses, to take me out to see my farm, and get a general lay of the land. It was just following the rainy season. Everything was green and lovely, and what animals we saw were butter fat. It being the dry season, I saw no hint of the mixed depth and adhesiveness the roads could take on in the rainy season. But I did see enough to realize that if I was to live out there, I must first learn to speak the language. So I went back to Gibara and sat down to study Spanish, with Sylvester as a teacher. The foundation I got helped, but you don't learn a language from a book in five weeks. At the end of that time I returned to Holguin, bought a few things I thought I would need to keep batch and start farming. I hired McCracken to haul me out.

The farm had had a pretty good palia leaf shack with dirt floor, but while standing idle, the ridge and sides had been stolen. It, also, had a well and a plantain patch. Plantain is the cooking banana. The road was rough and the horses pretty well jaded, so McCracken decided to stay over a day and rest the horses.

The sides and ridge of the houses are made of the leaf scale of the Royal Palm. My first job was obviously to repair my house. Mc Cracken went with me over to a neighbors who had a lot of royal palms and made a deal with him to collect the scales, called yaguas, as they fall from the trees and to flatten them out while still green.

McCracken had been gone but a few hours when two men came to see me. From their actions, I readily surmised that they had come for business, not merely to pass the time of day. Most of the words I had learned in the book didn't seem to have any relation to the business in hand. And such words that did apply, I didn't recognize when they hurled them at me. The Spaniard could write after a fashion. So I gave him a pencil and paper and he wrote something but I couldn't read his writing. It was a long and laborious process, but with lots of patience on both sides, I finally caught on to what they wanted. The Spaniard wanted to collect yaguas for me and the Cuban wanted to help me fix my house. I succeeded in making the Spaniard understand I had hired a Cuban to collect yaguas and made a deal with him to haul them. I hired the Cuban and we got to work that same afternoon. It was a case of the hired man being the boss and the owner taking orders from the hired man, but we fixed the house and did a good job of it.

Then I thought the open well should be cleaned out and got the idea across to him. He looked down in the well, pointed to himself, then down in the well and shook his head. I knew what he meant. So I pointed to myself, then down in the well and nodded. He drew the water out, and when ready, I took the end of the rope to let myself down. He said no, and took a turn around a nearby post and let me down. When the mud was about out, I began to wonder how I was going to get out. I was fully as heavy as he. The rope was plenty long enough for me to pull myself out, but how was I going to tell him to throw me the loose end? Luck was in my favor. A neighbor was passing by and he called him in and the two drew me out.

My next job was to fence my grassland. About the time I got that done with the help of a Cuban, Hill came down and moved in with me. By that time I was learning Spanish fast. I rounded up a bunch of Cubans and we fenced Hill's farm, then fenced Martin's.

About the time the rainy season got going good, Harry Hill, ex Penn 'Ol, came down. Luther borrowed my pony and raincoat and met him where the road and railroad intersected and brought him home in a driving rain. They spent a day or two on their farm and vicinity, then went to Holquin. On their return, Luther said to Harry, "I have waited a long time for you to get down here. We must decide what we are going to do. Are we going into the cattle business or to farming?"

"I don't know what you are going to do but I know what I am going to do. I am going back to Iowa."

"That isn't fair to me. I wrote you all the conditions before I bought and you told me to go ahead and buy and you would come and help run it."

"Reading a thing on paper and actually experiencing it are two entirely different things. I certainly am not going to be stuck out here 30 miles from the post office over such roads as we have been over."

"Well, I'm not going to stay here alone."

Soon they left and I carried on alone for a while and eventually began to think things through. I simply did not have capital enough to do anything on a scale to pay. So I made a deal with a Cuban to look after my few cattle and hogs on the

shares and I set out to hunt a job.

I traveled all over eastern Cuba wherever I heard there might be work. I went on horseback till the pony was jaded, then put her in pasture, hung my hammock, blanket, raincoat and a change of clothes over my back and walked. I soon learned that a college degree didn't mean a thing. There was always the question, What can you do? What experience have you had? At <sup>H</sup>Bazres, the Friends missionary, Raymond Holding, took me to the manager of the United Fruit Co. store. He was getting old and was just looking for a young man to come into the store as a clerk, and grow up in the business and eventually replace him. It looked like a wonderful opportunity. We were discussing living quarters, wages, etc. when I suddenly remembered that all stores in Cuba sold liquor. I asked, "will I be required to sell liquor?"

"You most certainly will. That is the most profitable part of the business."

At Antilla I was lucky enough, or unlucky enough, to run into the chief engineer of the Cuba R.R. Co. They were building a long trestle across an arm of the bay. He took me down and turned me over to the bridge foreman and told him to put me to work. He was a roughneck, American hating Canadian and obeyed orders with a vengeance. He put me and seven Spaniards to carrying 6'x18" stringers 30 feet long, with carrying hooks, to where they could be picked up with a hoisting engine and lifted onto the trestle. The work was really too heavy for my physical strength, but I needed a job. On the third day two Spaniards quit, and it was next to impossible for six of us. There was plenty of cable on the hoisting engine and I suggested to the boss that we could hook onto the timbers where they lay. Two men could guide them around while the engine did the work and he would have four men for other work.

He roared like an angry bull, "You're not paid to think on this job. Get hold of them hooks."

At noon I asked for my time.

Five years later I was resident engineer on a new R.R. the same company was building. He was sent over to build the pile bridges under my direction. He was still just a bridge foreman. I was being paid to think.

I heard that they were going to build a sugar mill on Nipe Bay, with headquarters at Mayari some 75 to 90 miles away. About 10 o'clock of the second day, I stopped

at a canteen, bought some lunch and inquired about the road. They told me it was a long ways and no houses but no trouble at all. Just follow the straight road. About noon I came to a fork in the road. One road was as straight as the other so I took the one that showed the most travel. The farther I traveled the more travel it showed. Then suddenly at a tidal river it ended. I didn't know it then but found later it was where they dumped cedar logs into the river and floated them out into the bay to load them onto ships. I had to return miles to the fork in the road.

Just at dusk and raining, I found some men building a shack. I asked about a place to spend the night. They told me it was still 15 miles to Mayari, but a Mr. Williams was building an engineers camp nearby. Williams treated me like a long lost brother. He not only allowed me to hang my hammock under his unfinished roof but gave me a good supper and breakfast and told me if I would just sit tight the mountain would come to Mohammed. For Mr. Garrett, manager of the new enterprise would be out next day.

Right here I want to digress long enough to say a word about Williams, for he was quite a character and our paths met many times in the next few years. His nickname, and the only one I ever knew him by, was Taffy. I presume it was given to him because he was a Welshman. Having a name for him, the men we worked with had to have one for me too. Likewise, presumably, because I didn't put my candle under a bushel, they dubbed me Quaker Williams. As soon as Taffy was old enough to leave home, he went to Demarrarah, South America to learn to be a sugar planter. I must say he learned it well, as, also, he learned a lot about the construction trade and above all he learned to "carry his liquor". I have met a lot of Demarrarah sugar planters and they always bragged more about their ability to "drink the other fellow under the table" than their ability to plant sugar cane. Taffy could do both and cover more ground than any other man on the job. His regular drinking habit was a "shot of whiskey for an "eye opener" when he got up in the morning. Another with his breakfast. Then he put half a dozen bottles of beer and a bottle of rum in his saddle bags when he went out to work. By noon the beer was gone and the rum half gone. He had another whiskey with his dinner. He replenished his beer in the saddle bags and went out for the afternoon. By quitting time the saddle bags were empty.

Then he really began to drink. By 7:30 or 8 he was scused but didn't get ugly. Just went to bed to sleep it off. In all the years I knew him I never saw him stagger.

Later, there were about fifteen of us in camp, of several nationalities, when malaria hit the camp. Taffy was the first to come down. They they came down one by one, just about in the order of the amount of liquor they drank. There were only two tee-totalers in camp, myself and another American about 60 years old. He was the last to come down. I didn't get it.

I attributed that to three things. As a boy in Kansas, I had it very bad and probably built up an immunity to it. I drank no liquor and kept my resistance up, and took quinine as a preventive when I was in malarial regions. In the 17 years I was in Cuba, I never had it.

Taffy went from one job to another, went down to Panama and worked on the canal, returned to Cuba and the last job he had was helping to raise the Battleship Maine. He died in his thirties from hardening of the arteries.

To get back to my story --- Mr. Garrett showed up in camp the next day and I hit him for a job. While we were talking a Cuban came up and he told me to find out what he wanted. I thought I was doing him a favor by interpreting. Later, I found the favor was the other way. He talked Spanish well. Was just checking up on my Spanish. After some more conversation he said he wasn't hiring any men now but would need a lot of men when he got the word to go ahead and would then give me a job. He took my name and address. I expected it to be the last I would hear from it. It wasn't.

Some months later, quite by accident, I ran into Irwin Marx of the engineering firm of Marx and Winder of Camaguey. I asked him for a job. He studied a little bit and said, "I have a pretty good sized land survey starting next week. I am going to run transit myself but if you want it I will give you \$1.50 per day and expenses to pull the head chain." That proved to be the turning point of my Cuban career. I was really getting quite discouraged and considering returning to the U.S.A., but it was January and no time to go north.

The survey was a big cattle ranch. Fenced, but had 92 sides to it and a lot of brush to cut. Marx went ahead with some Cuban brush cutters and set hubs at the

corners. I, with a Cuban, followed, chaining. When we were about two thirds of the way around a messenger from Camaguey brought him a telegram. He told me to take charge, finishing cutting brush, setting hubs and chaining, then take the transit and run compass surveys of cross fences and water courses till he got back. On his return, we measured angles just half a day when a messenger brought another telegram. He told me to go ahead with the cross fence and stream surveys and he would be back. He wasn't. So I went ahead and measured the angles of the outside. When I measured the last angle I was so nervous I had difficulty figuring the bearing. When I found the angles had closed, the relief was so great I just collapsed and lay on the ground till I could recover. It is very unusual for a figure to close perfectly, and especially when there were so many sides.

When I reached Camaguey, he wasn't there either. I learned what train he was coming in on and met the train. When he saw me he seemed quite perturbed and asked what I was doing there. I told him I had finished the survey and saw no need of staying longer.

"Do you mean the survey of the streams and fences?"

"I mean the survey, traverse and all."

"How did it close?"

"The angles closed. I haven't figured the closure on the distances."

"What do you mean by closed?"

"I mean closed to the minute."

"Where is your notebook?"

"At the hotel."

"I am going to be busy for a while. Get your notebook and meet me at the office in an hour."

When I gave him the notebook he started looking it over. He would study it for a few pages, then look at me. Finally, he said, "If a Cuban engineer were to hand me a book like this, I would burn the book and kick him out of the office. But you look so d---d honest, I don't know what to do. What did you do with the transit?"

"I left it there. I couldn't carry it in."

"Monday morning we will go out there and measure a few angles at random and see

what the score is."

Monday morning we went out and started measuring angles. As we measured, he got happier; then suddenly, "I've got a minute on you here." He looked again and said, "It isn't quite a minute but should have been thrown the other way." We measured a few more. And "Here's another one. That makes two. H-a-m. That's the other way. That balances." We measured another one or two and he put the transit in the box and said, "If the work will hold up I will make an engineer out of you inside a year."

Then we went back to the office and started figuring latitudes, departures, double meridian distances and areas. All by logarithms. Saturday when he came in after dinner he said, "I see where you leave for Santa Clara tomorrow night. My friend, Arbuckle, has taken an option on a cattle ranch and wants it surveyed before he closes the option. I can't go now. You will go up with him and I'll come up as soon as possible and help finish."

When I got back from that survey, a letter was waiting me from Mr. Garrett offering me a job as overseer on the new sugar plantation. I hadn't the slightest idea what an overseer's duties were but had learned to speak Spanish and figured I could learn the rest, so accepted. I could write a volume on the happenings here. Two happenings are of special interest.

One was the slant I got on some peoples ideas of Christianity. One of the overseers was a Bohemian, an experienced sugar planter, with a lot of experience in Latin America; educated in his native Bohemia and in Germany and spoke 4 or 5 languages. One day something was said about Christianity, and he said he was a Christian. I frankly told him that from his language it didn't sound like it.

"Why, I never swear."

I named him the time and place I had heard quite an outburst.

"T.s.t., That was in Spanish. God doesn't understand Spanish. I never swear in German."

And he was dead serious about it.

Some 2 or 3 months after I went there we went into camp one day at noon and found

a letter on the bulletin board. After issuing a few camp orders, it proceeded to divide my work up among the other overseers and then said "we are naming N.K. Williams Superintendent of Transportation. For the present you will have to do your transporting with oxen. There are 40 yoke of oxen in the pasture at Santa Isabel. Go over and help yourself."

Santa Isabel was about 5 miles away. My only means of personal transportation was on foot. Nevertheless, I rounded up a bunch of ox drivers and we walked over and picked out about a dozen yoke of oxen and went to dragging cross ties and bridge timbers out of the woods. The clearing contractors hewed ties and bridge timbers before they felled the timber and I had to drag them out. I thought I was doing all right when one day Mr Garrett came along and said, "Williams, how many hours a day are you working those oxen?"

"Nine."

"That isn't enough. You will have to work them 10 hours."

"Mr. Garrett, they won't work 10 hours."

"I'd like to know what in h--l you know about it?"

I hadn't known very long but was learning fast. I had looked a long time before I found this job and had no desire to start looking again for another one. So I didn't start an argument. Instead, I told the ox drivers. They told me just what I had told Mr. Garrett.

"You know it. I know it and the oxen know it, but Mr. Garrett doesn't. You will have to keep them in the yoke 10 hours."

Next day at noon another letter on the bulletin board. Among other things, "The oxen must work 10 hours a day. 6 till 11 AM and 12 noon to 5 PM." In the 10 hours through the heat of the day the oxen did less than they had been doing in 9 hours, working early and late, with a long noon.

About the time the rainy season got well started the blow really came. I got orders to move the pile driver down the railroad right of way from one bridge to another. The right of way was cleared 100 feet wide right through the jungle and at this particular place, it was at right angles to the trade wind. Not one breath of air. It was in the tropics so the sun shone straight down at noon and the ground

was steaming. Oxen don't sweat and they just couldn't take it. One time I had eleven yoke on a cart loaded for three. I simply wasn't getting anything done. One morning about ten o'clock, we were trying to go back with the empty carts. The oxen had their tongues lolled and wouldn't tighten into the yoke. The Cubans drive their oxen with a short, sharp nail driven into the end of a pole about three-fourths inch in diameter. If they scratch an ox with it, the flies will blow it and he gets screw worms. So when they really want to punish an ox, they jam the nail through the hide and scratch his ribs, dragging the hide with the nail.

I looked back and saw Mr. Garrett coming. He turned into a camp. I told my drivers to wait and I went back.

"Mr. Garrett, can you come with me a minute? I have something to show you."

"What is it?"

"I can show you better than I can tell you."

When we got back, I said to the drivers, "Let's go." Cubans aren't known for their mercy and they really let go with their prods. Every time they prodded one he leaned from the prod and bellowed, but didn't tighten into the yoke. I stopped the abuse and turning to Mr. Garrett I said, "Mr. Garrett, I wish you would tell me the use of abusing the oxen this way. You are going to kill some of them."

"D-m it! I've got to get that pile driver moved!"

I felt a shiver run down my spine as I said, "If you had told me to move the pile driver instead of telling me to work the oxen ten hours a day, it would have been moved a long time ago."

He turned around in his saddle. Dug his spurs into his horse and said, "D-m it! Move it!"

I had the drivers unyoke right there. Put the oxen in the shade and gave them some cane tops to eat. At four, I had them put some cane tops on the carts, yoke up and go to the pile driver. At the pile driver I had them unyoke and feed the oxen. Also, had the rest of the pile driver loaded. I told the drivers to yoke up at two o'clock in the morning when the moon comes up and travel. When I got to the job the next morning, the pile driver was moved and being set up and the empty carts headed

for the feed lot. I heard no more about working oxen ten hours a day.

Not too long after that, like a bolt from the blue, I got a telegram from Marx offering me a job as <sup>level</sup> ~~level~~ man on a railroad survey. It so happened that railroad was a spur line connecting Holquin with the Cuban company mainline. While we were working on that, Birdie Pickett came down from Nebraska and Charles Haworth married us in the Quaker Mission in Holquin. When that survey was done, they sent me over to Guantanamo as instrument man for a resident engineer they had locating and building a number of short spurs out into the cane fields. We moved eight lines in five months. Living conditions were bad to horrible. Birdie couldn't take it. I think she would have died of homesickness if I hadn't sent her home to mother.

After we finished our work around Guantanamo and were on our way back to Camaguey, I saw what looked like some American houses being built at Onaja. It struck me that if I could get a steady job in an American colony maybe Birdie would find Cuba more livable. I made inquiry. Contacted the promoters; got the job of colony surveyor and resigned with Marx and Windsor.

The following June they sent me to the U.S. to sell land and bring colonists. It was the only time I was off the island in 15 years. About the time I began to get a few people interested, headlines blared all over the newspapers. "Revolution in Cuba". In the fall I went back but didn't take Birdie. I was afraid of what I might run into. The revolution had stopped the flow of colonists so there was little need of surveying. I did what little there was; built me a shack on land that I had bought so I could have a place to call home and took jobs of land surveying wherever I could find them. I found enough to keep fairly busy.

The next summer, not only Birdie came back but, also, my brother, John, and family and my sister, Luella, Penn '04. Followed a series of fairly prosperous years. Land surveys, drainage survey, and sugar mill construction. My longest job was location and helping build approximately 100 miles of railroad through solid jungle on Cuba's north coast. My most difficult and spectacular job was a drainage survey in the famous Zapata Swamp on the south coast. Water and mud from knee deep to up to the arm pits. In open swamp, men waded and pulled our supplies in a light boat. In mangroves and other scrub timber, they had to carry the supplies on their backs.

There was always a fight with the crocodiles. At night we slept in hammocks and had to climb trees to get them high enough so the crocodiles couldn't jump to them.

Five children were born into the family. Luella's husband and I bought 1,000 acres of fertile timber land near the railroad I was building. Early in 1917, I made arrangements with a sugar mill to finance me to plant the whole to sugarcane and I resigned my job with the railroad. I had visions of becoming a rich man in a very few years. I had just got a good start cutting down timber when a revolution broke out. They drove off my men; burned my clearing before it was dry and let weeds and vines take it; stopped construction on the railroad and burned four million dollars worth of cane just at harvest time for the mill that was going to finance me so they couldn't fulfill their contract. It not only paralyzed me but the whole country. To add to my troubles, Birdie needed medical treatment she couldn't get in Cuba and the older children would in another year or so be as far as they could go in school there. So the next year I pulled stakes and came to Florida.

Two years later, I was offered so much to go back as Chief Engineer for a sugar mill that I couldn't resist the temptation, but I never took the family back. I was there when raw sugar took a tumble from 23¢ a pound to 3¢ a pound. It broke every bank in Cuba except the National City Bank of New York and the Royal Bank of Canada. It paralyzed the whole island and I lost my job.

I returned to Florida and was here in time to meet the Florida boom, head on. ~~There~~ Besides working as an engineer, I traded in Real estate till I was worth more than \$100,000. The break of the boom in 1926 trimmed the fringes of my \$100,000 but I still had some left.

On the night of September 16, 1928, we were hit by the worst hurricane that ever hit Florida. Over 2,000 persons were killed, some of them our near neighbors. The radio station sent a messenger out to warn us to flee for our lives. We did and none of us were hurt, but that night wiped out my life's savings.

Next morning my earthly possessions were a sick wife and eight children, three of them in college. Florida was paralyzed. No work here. First the Salvation Army and then the Red Cross helped us and I began to look for a job elsewhere.

Henry J. Kaiser was at that time building the Cuba National Highway through Camaguey Province, Cuba. I had never heard of Kaiser, but through friends there, I got a job there with him. I went with him on a job in Old Mexico, to Montana, and, finally, down on Hoover Dam. I got no engineering to do there. There were too many engineers there before I arrived. I had to take what they handed me. Some of it was just plain common labor, but most of it was classed as semi-skilled. I finally settled down to running <sup>sand</sup> the classifier, washing and grading the sand for the dam. We worked around the clock 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At one time or another, I worked on every shift but got 14 months straight on the graveyard shift and didn't like it. All told, I was there more than three years. I never worked so long in my life on a job I disliked so much. I would have quit but I like to eat. I and my family were eating regularly and at that time there were millions in the U.S. who weren't. It was the most monotonous <sup>period</sup> time of my life. When I went there, I thought it would be really something to work on such a big job. On most of my jobs I was a boss with others doing the work. Here I had about three bosses over me while I did the work and I definitely decided I would rather be a big duck in a little pond than a little duck in a big pond.

When I got through there I went down to Los Angeles. I couldn't find any work, so with my savings on the dam I bought a small business. While I didn't actually lose any money in the business, there was never a month that ~~I made~~ the profits were sufficient to keep the family.

I read in the paper that the contract had been let for digging the All American Canal with headquarters at Yuma, Arizona. I hitched-hiked down and luck was with me. I didn't know it but the father of a boy in my Sunday School Class at Boulder City was construction engineer and had a place for me. I broke my last \$20 bill to pay a weeks board after I got the job.

In June, 1938, I was inspector on one of the drops in the All American Canal. Some one on the day shift left the cover off a drainage well. It was 25 feet deep and lined with concrete. Working night shift, I dropped into it like a nickel in the slot. The jar almost killed father. When I got out of the hospital, I asked for a transfer to the office and got it. I never got out into the field again.

In October 1941, I married Hattie Kinsey who was a neighbor in Cuba many years ago.

By 1948, the work at Yuma was narrowing down, but was expanding on the Columbia Basin Project in Washington. So in November I was transferred. I had not seen a winter since 1903 and this proved to be the worst winter they had had in 50 years.

April 30, 1951, I reached the age of retirement. My stepson and his wife flew up from Cuba and joined us. We spent two months and 8,000 miles visiting relatives, friends, parks, dairies and engineering works. We came to Fort Pierce, Florida because I have two sons and six grandchildren here and my wife has two sons and six grandchildren just across the channel in Cuba. After buying a house and getting settled, we went to Cuba for a visit, then returned to try to grow old gracefully.

N.K. Williams